



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY McMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Clinton Police Arrest Local Man In Internet Predator Sting

Columbia - Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Benjamin Maurice Rhodes, 31, of 67 Palmetto Street in Clinton, was arrested on August 28, 2008, in an undercover Internet sting conducted by the Clinton Department of Public Safety.

The Clinton Department of Public Safety is a member of the Attorney General's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force.

Rhodes was arrested on one (1) count of Criminal Solicitation of a Minor (§ 16-15-342), a felony offense punishable to ten (10) years imprisonment.

An arrest warrant alleges that Rhodes began online "chats" on April 14, 2008, with a person he believed to be a thirteen (13) year old girl. In reality, he was communicating with an undercover Clinton police officer.

A search warrant was executed at Rhodes' residence on August 28, 2008, and resulted in the seizure of a computer and computer-related items.

Rhodes was assigned a \$10,000 bond. A booking photo is available through the Clinton Department of Public Safety.

This is the one hundred thirty-eighth (138th) arrest for the Task Force.

The case will be prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

McMaster stressed that all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they are proven guilty in a court of law.

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